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C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 001594

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [IZ](#) [CA](#)
SUBJECT: CANADA WITHDRAWS ENTIRE IRAQI EXCHANGE CONTINGENT

REF: A. OTTAWA 1576
[1](#)B. OTTAWA 1501
[1](#)C. STATE 126109

Classified By: Pol MinCouns Scott Bellard, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C/NF) Canada decided on December 26 to withdraw all nine of its exchange officers embedded with U.S. forces in Iraq, following a high-level decision by Department of National Defence (DND) policy makers in response to a DND risk assessment, according to Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) legal officer Suneeta Millington. Despite earlier assurances by Millington (ref a) that Canada would keep some of the contingent in place, she admitted on December 29 that DND and DFAIT leaders "just did not have the comfort level to keep any of them in place, given the results of the risk assessment."

[1](#)2. (C/NF) Millington added that Canada has no plans to approach the Iraqi government to negotiate an agreement that would give legal protection to future Canadian embeds with U.S. forces. She reiterated the "high importance" that Canada places on the overall embed opportunities, and promised that DND would initiate mil-mil discussions with DOD counterparts in Washington soon after the new year to discuss future arrangements for Canadian exchange officers in light of this new Iraq-specific restriction.

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